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En Memoriam.

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WILLIAM PAGE,  
LORD HATHERLEY.

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*July, 1881.*









At the end of 1867 I published a small pamphlet condemning Dr. Kalisch's "Observations on Leviticus," which, strange to say, was allowed, with this solitary exception, to pass unheeded by all his Jewish co-religionists, although, much to their credit be it said, it was vigorously attacked by the Protestants. I therein used arguments condensed from the preface and other parts of the late Lord Hatherley's "Continuity of Scripture," and in reply to my note forwarding to him my treatise, I had the gratification to receive from him the following autograph letter:—

" 31, Great George Street, S.W.

" Vice-Chancellor Wood presents his compliments to Mr. Guedalla, and begs to thank him for his courtesy in forwarding the treatise on Dr. Kalisch's publication, and for the honour that he has done the Vice-Chancellor in noticing 'The Continuity of Scripture.' The latter work is now in its second edition, and the Vice-Chancellor trusts Mr. Guedalla's work may prove effective in its refutation of Dr. Kalisch's various errors, rejoicing, as he does, in fellow-labourers."

Amongst other esteemed testimonials, I also received the following from the late Henry Jessel, Esq., brother to the Master of the Rolls:—

" 4, Craven Hill Gardens,

" 23rd February, 1868.

" Dear Mr. Guedalla,—I hope you will accept my most cordial thanks for your very able and interesting pamphlet on



the now all-important Bible question. I assure you I have derived the greatest gratification from the perusal of it, and I cannot find words to express my sense of your talent, industry, and love of religion, as displayed in your composition. Indeed, I think the whole community greatly indebted to you.

“ Believe me, &c.,

“ HENRY JESSEL.”

As a fitting humble “ In Memoriam ” of the unaffected piety of the late Lord Hatherley, I again re-publish the very portions of which I availed myself in 1867.

H. GUEDALLA.

August 1st, 1881.

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## WILLIAM PAGE, LORD HATHERLEY'S, DEFENCE OF SCRIPTURE.

(*From "Continuity of Scripture," London, 1867.*)

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One may have been, especially of late, perplexed by the alleged discovery on the part of men of learning, that much of the Old Testament has been erroneously accepted as the authentic writing of the several authors to whom the books are attributed, or unduly credited with a prophetic character. He may have neither time, nor learning, nor judgment, to sift or to decide upon such alleged discoveries. At some future time, it may possibly be permitted me to examine the supposed evidence on which are based some very confident assertions of a self-styled "high criticism."

Assuming the learning to be profound and accurate which has collected the materials for many such critical performances, the logic by which conclusions are deduced from those materials is frequently grievously at fault, and open to the judgment of all who may have been accustomed to sift and weigh evidence.

Much has been said about leaving young people to their unbiassed judgment. But if this had been intended by the Author of our being, we should not have been ushered into the world as infants, but as full-grown men or women. Authority must and ever will form every human mind. Well is it for us if that authority be Divine. Well is it for us that we can listen to the living Word, whose words are spirit and life. His actions live in the pages of that blessed Book ever before our eyes, that we may follow His steps, not merely listening to moral



sentences, but imitating His example, and growing as children do in the likeness of Him to whom we are thus looking up. When we wake up after His likeness we shall indeed be satisfied with it.

It is thus that the Almighty Author describes its operation : " For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater : so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth : it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." (Isaiah, lv. c., 10, 11 v.)

The Bible has been continuous in its moral object, the eradication of selfishness in every form, and the supplanting of it by love. It has been continuous in its spiritual object, the raising of man to a consciousness of his everlasting existence. The fruits of this wondrous Book have been no less continuous—namely, a gradual advancement in morals, and mutual loving sympathy in all nations which have accepted its teaching, and in proportion to their simple acceptance of it ; whilst a frightful outburst of evil has taken place where, for a while, its authority has been spurned and rejected by those who had been once subjected to its influence.

I do not believe that anyone who has sought for guidance or comfort in its pages has ever failed in his hope. Though, of course, to anyone who reads simply to criticise, or to judge that Word by which we believe we shall be judged, it would be vain to address any argument deduced from personal experience.

If there be one characteristic of the Bible by which it may be most briefly contrasted with every other work intended to affect the lives and conduct of men, it is this : that it is historically, not argumentatively, didactic.

It does not tell men merely what they ought to be, and leave them



there ; but, teaching them how and for what purpose they were created, it tells them also historically that they have hopelessly fallen from that condition.

This wonderful Book was composed by a variety of agents of the Divine Will, at distant epochs, yet all working to one end ; but now I wish to call attention to the fact that we have also left to us numerous works of merely human authors, in the Greek and Latin languages, written also by men of various epochs and various positions in life, and many more such works we know existed which have since perished. Moreover, in these works there are not to be found prophetic anticipations of historical events, or moral precepts to which those who follow them should in like manner continuously testify. Observe, too, that the inspired authors make their bold assertions in the presence of men equally well read with themselves in the previous writings, equally admitting also their prophetic import, and disputing only its interpretation. On the contrary, the heathen philosophers of one age are usually controverted either by their contemporaries or by their successors.

If a special school of opinion were formed by some profound thinker, its opinions were found to vary, within a few years, from those of their founder, and the moral destiny of the world cannot be said to have been permanently affected by the dogmas of even the best and soundest teachers of heathendom. Still less can such teaching have been said to have consoled the afflicted, whether rich or poor, learned or unlearned, under the ordinary trials of life.

What effect upon the moral nature of man, or the development of his highest faculties, which alone can bring him into communion with his Maker, had the writings of the greatest Greek and Latin authors ? We know from these authors themselves that the most shameless lust, the most disgraceful intemperance, the most savage cruelty towards captives taken in wars which were in themselves utterly unjustifiable,



prevailed. The educated classes of society had no settled faith in aught beyond this life, whilst the lower were sunk in abject superstitions, and gradually losing every trace of the once stern, patriotic self-devotion of the Roman character. It is scarcely too much to say that from the time of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans the heathen world began rapidly to sink into utter darkness.

Has or has not the world's history been conformable to the announcements of the Bible? The writings of Horace, of Tacitus, of Juvenal, demonstrate the contempt in which the Jews were held as a nation before and after the present era.

That Bible, which professes to be the Word of God, had, on the contrary, been accepted by the people to whom it was addressed—had moulded their whole external and internal life. Their calamities had been attributed by themselves to their departure from it, their success to their conformity with its precepts, and, if misunderstood, it was still the professed rule of conduct.

So many authors have fully and demonstratively pointed out the distinction between the Bible and Koran, and their effects upon the moral and spiritual condition of mankind, that I will simply make one remark on each topic. The Koran contains much of the Bible. The denunciation of idolatry, the doctrine of the one true God, give it, therefore, some of that living power which ever accompanies the Word of God. On the other hand, as regards its effects, the miserable admixture of the human element in the false prophet's work is seen in the lust and the cruelty of his followers, and in the sterility of those few portions of the good seed, which has been choked by the worldly thorns and briars so plentifully scattered in its pages.

The Old Testament was written (as regards its human authors), at intervals, during a period of more than a thousand years. Its various books were composed by the agency of men of almost every character and position in life. The great legislator Moses, leaders of armies,



judges, kings, are among its authors. Some of them lived amid the struggles of conflict ; some in the enjoyment of peace and wealth and splendour. Prophets also were taken from various ranks of life, from among the priests, from the blood royal, from herdsmen, or other humble occupations. Some of them wrote in times of danger and distress, others in times of prosperity ; some were in high favour at the courts of kings, and others in deep depression and temporal disgrace. Their style is as varied as their rank, but their subject always one.

But whilst a moral life was thus insisted upon, and every circumstance was so ordered as to encourage its development, it is also plainly enough indicated in every portion of Scripture, how little man, with all his own efforts, is able thus to answer the requirements of God. And doubtless it is for this reason that the fearful shortcomings of even the best men (morally speaking) are laid before us with all the plain sincerity of a holy truthfulness.

Noah's shameful drunkenness ; Lot's worldly choice of an abode ; Abraham's timid deceit with reference to Sarah ; Isaac's partiality for his profane son Esau ; Jacob's fraud ; Moses' impatience ; David's crimes ; Solomon's folly ; Elijah's timidity immediately succeeding his undaunted denunciation of Ahab and Jezebel ; Hezekiah's vanity—all show but too plainly what is in man, and the helplessness of his own efforts to raise himself if he be left, but for a season, alone.

There is no true source of power but One, even the Everlasting God, whose works are all "very good." The first man is stated to have been made in "God's likeness;" that is to say, with a mind capable of thought, with a soul capable of love, with authority and power over the lower creation, and with a capacity for communicating, however subordinately, with the Great Creative Spirit. He was entrusted also with the power of self-determination with respect to his actions.



The external world is never mentioned in Scripture without a direct reference to man's condition upon earth. The slight indications given of physical creation are merely such as to teach him that an All-wise, and All-powerful, and All-benevolent Creating Spirit is the Author of everything that exists, bringing all into being out of nothing by His simple Word, and making all "very good;" so that man should have no excuse for the foolish worship of inanimate objects, however glorious in beauty (as the sun and moon and host of heaven), but should worship Him only by Whom both they and he exist. The habitual tendency of fallen man to believe that the evil which he sees around him is a Power, or the result of a Power, instead of mere negation, is thus at once rebuked.





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